Procurement News – Near and **FAR**

Volume III, No.9 Winter 2001

Introduction

Welcome to the Winter 2001 quarterly edition of Treasury's Procurement News - Near and **FAR.** This issue includes a warm up for the March Treasury Procurement Conference that will feature our future in terms of the business advisors we all need to become and a calendar of upcoming events for the Treasury Small Business Development Office. We are delighted to welcome D. Jay Hoffman, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Management, as a guest contributor for this issue. His article, on page 2, describes the management transition process resulting from the Presidential election.

Mary Lou Alderman will be the editor for the Spring 2001 issue. Please submit articles by mid- April. You may e-mail your articles to: mary.lou.alderman@do.treas.gov . Mary Lou can also be reached on 202-622-0803.

IN THIS EDITION

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Corey Rindner,
Procurement Executive

The Treasury Annual Procurement Conference is scheduled for March 27/28 2001 at Bolling Air Force Base. The conference will focus on the soft skills that make the procurement professional a better business manager. Like last year, we will also use this event as a way of bringing our enormously diverse procurement community together to renew old acquaintances and start new ones.

What makes an effective business leader? Interpersonal skills are certainly at the top of the list. This year's conference will feature presentations to assist the procurement professional in managing teams and contributing to program management. We will also provide opportunities to meet with new Treasury management.

So mark your calendars… we'll see you there.
(Registration details on page 14.)

Presidential Transition:

Changing Faces, Changing Management

by D. Jay Hoffman
Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Management

While the transition from President Clinton to President Bush occurred within the last few weeks, preparation for the change in Administration at Treasury started many months ago. During the summer of 2000, a team of employees from across the Office of Management began convening weekly meetings, discussing the issues and workload increases unique to a change in administration. The principal question: How exactly does an organization transition out 80-90 employees on a Friday, many of whom are in key positions, and yet be ready to have an entirely new team up and running by Monday morning?

The Management transition team tackled this question at the root, drilling down to fundamental processes and procedures across several offices. The result of their study and work are revamped processes across Treasury that benefit not only those employees entering and exiting the workforce, but all Treasury employees. Computer passwords are now available when employees enter on duty, and Internet passwords can be obtained within an hour! Quick reference guides are available with easy, plain language instructions on getting started in your new job. Key forms have been automated. Redundant computer databases, once maintained independently and plagued by conflicting information are now linked together to decrease the workload and ensure data consistency. Equally important, we learned to work as a team, to create expectations and live up to those expectations, and to sow the seeds of a culture change within Treasury.

I want to elaborate if I might on two tangible accomplishments: The Quick Reference Guide for New Employees and the new Internet based Exit and Entry Processes. The Quick Reference Guide for New Employees, more commonly referred to as the “Survival Kit”, is exactly what the title implies. It is a compilation of information about where to go for help, and more importantly, how to help yourself. As we worked to assemble a kit for new employees, we realized that so much of this “survival” information was often learned through the grapevine and by trial and error over the course of months on the job. There was no one place and no one person to go to when you had a problem to be solved or question that needed answering. The kit is an abbreviated plain-language, one-stop shopping guide. It covers things like dialing the phone locally versus dialing long-distance, how to get parking or Metro information, ethics briefings, logging into the computer, the difference between the Intranet and Internet, and so on. The kit is available online by clicking the “New Employees” icon from the DONet Homepage. Check it out. It is truly the trivial pursuit of Treasury’s management operations!

The second transition product is the new Internet based Exit and Entry Processes. The fundamental goal of this system was to let stakeholders in service delivery offices know when people were being hired and when they were leaving their jobs. The advantages of doing this online were that we could track people and identify where in the entry or exit process they were at. An employee’s status in the entry and exit processes can be tracked using a virtual check-off sheet, updated by the various functional offices. The result is a faster response, fewer last minute headaches, and more complete service delivery, all done right from the employee’s desk.

So far, these new processes have worked well. We successfully processed nearly 100 resignations from the previous administration, and on the first day of the new administration, brought on 13 new political appointees, with more trickling in every day. Our new Secretary, Paul O’Neill was confirmed by the Senate shortly after the Inauguration of President Bush on January 20th, and his Chief of Staff, Tim Adams, joined us on January 22nd.

While the work of Treasury’s internal transition team has been going on for many months, and the “transition” is clearly entering its final phases with the inauguration of the 43rd President, much work lies ahead. The internal team will likely remain active for much of 2001, continuing to work with policy offices on preparing briefings and getting staff in the right place at the right time. There are still, undoubtedly, many lessons to be learned from this process that will help us prepare both for the work of Treasury, and our next Presidential Transition in the years ahead.

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

By Dan Sturdivant

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management & Chief Financial Officer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management Operations, early on established a "mission" for its policy and decision-making offices. These entities would be helpful to the Department and its bureaus by providing exceptional service, and serve as a catalyst for achieving better business results.

Furthermore, a "vision" was established that would show Treasury to be a Government-wide leader in achieving business results, partnering with its customers to continually improve performance, as well as operate as a team.

No where is this vision more evident than in Treasury's Office of Small Business Development (OSBD). Through the first quarter of calendar year 2001, the OSBD will either host or participate in the following activities:

January: In conjunction with several Treasury bureaus, the OSBD is planning a Texas Vendor Outreach Session (VOS) in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas. The bureau of Engraving & Printing will be the lead agency with additional participation from IRS, OCC, and Customs. This event is modeled after Treasury's monthly VOS, which features prearranged, 15-minute appointments, and will spotlight the Treasury bureaus with a procurement presence in the Texas area.

February: Besides hosting its regular monthly VOS (to be held on February 12, 2001) Treasury's OSBD has been requested to participate in the 7th Annual African American Summit, which is scheduled for February 13-16, 2001 at the Auburn University Hotel & Conference Center, in Auburn, Alabama. The extent of Treasury's involvement will revolve around one-on-one counseling with registered entrepreneurs, and booth staffing with an eye towards increasing Treasury-wide marketplace diversity.

March: Treasury's March VOS will feature Women-Owned Businesses only in keeping with the spirit and intent of the new Public Law 106-554, which was signed into law on December 21, 2000. It should also be duly noted that Treasury had taken the initiative to foster Women-Owned Businesses only VOS long before the law was signed. Furthermore, annually Treasury has among the highest achievement of Women-Owned Business goals in all of the Federal Government. Also in March, a member of Treasury's OSBD staff will participate in a small business conference in Spokane, Washington. He will teach a seminar on "How to do Business with the Department of the Treasury".

April: Treasury's OSBD will again take the lead in the planning and implementation of the 11th Annual Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) Conference 2001, which is hosted by all of the Federal Government OSDBU Directors. This conference will take place at the Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, on Tuesday, April 24, 2001. Representatives from eight other agencies have volunteered to serve on the Planning Committee. This particular conference has been identified as one of the top 3 small business events held in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, but draws well over 2,500 participants from all over the country. Following the conference, Treasury's OSBD will host its annual Small Business Awards Ceremony and Small Business Specialist training. Additionally a member of Treasury's OSBD will attend and participate in the Chicago Business Opportunity Fair, the largest conference in the Midwest. This conference also allows Treasury's OSBD to show its "esprit de corps" by staffing and teaching small business customer service strategy to Treasury's OCC field office in downtown Chicago.

It's obvious that Treasury's OSBD, under the auspices of its Director, Kevin Boshears, continues to create programs, partnerships and alliances that promote U.S. entrepreneurship and provides the small business community an opportunity to participate and compete for Treasury requirements.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE NEWS

by Richard Miller

Changes in automation, the Web and Internet are fast and frequent! Procurement automation is virtually no longer slowed by technology, but rather by our organizations. New initiatives are arising monthly that do or will affect your procurement work.

Suppose you were working every week with a Web-based federal procurement system and came up with good ideas to improve it. Suppose your ideas could be quickly provided to a government-wide body that had the funds to make those changes. Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps or FBO, or formerly EPS) is offering this opportunity to you NOW, even as it continues to add other features. Recently, FBO switched contractors, which led to some bad code being introduced, and this caused grief for some users…especially at BPD. FBO is well endowed with Federal Supply Schedule funding (your 1%-plus fees). So, if you envision changes that would be helpful, let me know at richard.miller@do.treas.gov. I'll take them to the government-wide user group.

Suppose you only had to go one time to a single Web site to obtain all the accurate and current vendor identification and Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) data that you need to provide to accounts payable. The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) System concluded its pilot testing in Treasury at the end of January. Generally positive feedback is being collected and analyzed before a final implementation decision is made.

Suppose you could go to a single Web site and find virtually all you need to know to perform your contract specialist duties. GSA has initiated a government-wide effort to develop a Web-enabled "federal procurement knowledge management portal" to support front-line contract specialists with all the possible online tools, information, acquisition sources and resources they need to do their jobs most effectively. Treasury is participating along with other major agencies. No time frame has been defined as yet.

Suppose your procurement systems were completely interfaced with all your other key agency systems as well as all government-wide systems. OFPP has initiated a Rapid Improvement Team to establish a common federal procurement IT architecture. If the initial plans are carried forward from the January kickoff, XML (Extensible Markup Language) will be the IT language serving as the vehicle to interface the majority of financial systems, federal procurement systems (FBO, CCR, Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), etc.), and agency/bureau contract writing systems.

Suppose all federal financial systems used the same common data fields as all federal procurement systems. The Procurement Executives Council (PEC) has struck a deal with the Joint Financial Management Improvement Project (JFMIP) office to develop such common data field and definition standards for all financial systems that will be used by the federal government. This is a joint effort by procurement and finance staff across government, lead by Russ Ashworth, Procurement Executive for the Department of Agriculture.

Remember: You're either in line or online…the choice is yours!

Bits and Bytes!

by Richard Miller

- A comprehensive guide to ADR is located at www.adr.af.mil/iadrwg/.
- Available to federal purchasers:
  - ✓ www.buyers.gov – Provides reverse auctions and volume IT purchases
  - ✓ www.efederal.com – Provides online purchasing, market research and pricing tools for Purchase Card holders
- Federal White Pages on all of us – www.directory.gov
- A Performance Based Contracting Desk Reference - http://www.chunker.com/performDR/toc.htm
- Extensive federal acquisition information (maintained by a GAO auditor) - http://www.wifcon.com/

IT ACCESSIBILITY NOW!

by Richard Miller

I prefer curb cuts to curbs, ramps to steps, escalators and elevators to stairs! Yet, the intended beneficiaries for these mobility aids are individuals with disabilities…and I'm not among them…yet!

Even as these innovations have assisted individuals with disabilities to navigate in our communities, digital "ramps and elevators" are being implemented to help the handicapped navigate in the digital world. One of the prime movers for this initiative is Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 1998 Amendments. These amendments require that the federal government make its Information Technology (IT) accessible to the interested public and to its employees.

CIO Offices are responsible for overseeing Section 508, and personnel offices are required to enforce it. Procurement is tasked with implementing the Act by virtue of its being the control point for all federal IT acquisition. A proposed FAR rule was published on January 22nd (http://www.arnet.gov/far/ProposedRules/) that allows comments by March 23rd before the final rule is issued.

As of June 21st , the enforcement date of the Act, procurement offices may only purchase "accessible IT" products in keeping with what will then be the final FAR rule. As of that date, employees and the public may take action against the government for lack of compliance.

Additional excellent guidance, and department and bureau coordinators, are available at www.section508.gov. To reach the Department of Justice Section 508 Home Page, click on (http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/508/508home.html. The IRS' Information Resources Accessibility Program (IRAP) has quality guidance, assistance, & product-testing capabilities available, and an educational 7-minute IRAP video that introduces their services (contact T. J. Cannady at 202/283-4204).

Your wise course of action is to become as familiar as possible with the evolving FAR requirement, and the Access Board standards that define "IT accessibility"(http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/508standards.htm). To register for the free March 26th GSA training forum at the Ronald Reagan Bldg. in Washington, DC, click on http://www.cmpinc.net/section508/. Exhort your customers to become familiar with Section 508 also: otherwise, their procurement requests will cause additional headaches.

Remember: accessibility benefits all!

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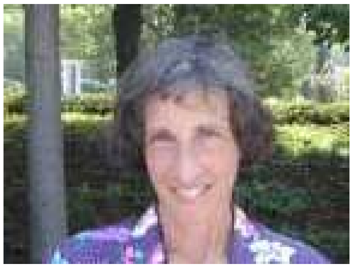
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, PEOPLE?

by Ronne A. Rogin, Procurement Analyst, OP



If we take a good, hard look at what our lives are about, whether personal or professional, it all comes down to how well we manage our relationships. How you relate to your family, your significant other, you co-workers, your supervisor, etc. will determine your happiness and your feeling of self-worth. As we evolve from "old-style" contracting professionals to the business managers of tomorrow, we must learn how to manage (and sometimes juggle) all of our relationships.
This year's procurement conference (March 27-28, 2001) will focus on "soft skills." Why? Because it is no longer sufficient to be technical masters of our profession. We must learn to communicate, facilitate, mediate, and partner. To be successful, this should be our collective goal. You may already be doing these things without even realizing it.

Imagine yourself as a contract administrator, having a meeting with your COTR and the contractor. An issue has arisen that requires discussion, analysis, and resolution. The COTR feels very strongly that the contractor is not living up to his/her end of the bargain, and the contractor feels s/he is following the letter of the contract exactly. Do you not find yourself facilitating a discussion, mediating between the parties, and working towards an acceptable solution? Obviously, you must know the contractual and legal requirements – often, that's the easy part - but you must also understand the personalities of the individuals, how to motivate them, how to address them, how to read their non-verbal communications, etc. The person who doesn't make eye contact, who sits with his arms folded across his chest is not engaged in the conversation. Make note of that and try to draw him in by speaking to him directly or giving an example of a situation to which he can relate. Many times, in our attempts to be tactful, our points are missed completely. Use an analogy that relates to the individual's interests. That will show your understanding of the individual as a person, and will help get your point across.

Every reader is probably asking, "How do we know what interests an individual has?" Here's where we can dig back to something we learned way back in our beginning contracting classes. Each negotiation session has three phases, *warm-up*, discussion, and closure. During the warm-up phase, reach out to each person as much as possible. Ask how his/her weekend was, what s/he did, what's going on in his/her office, etc. These casual conversations will serve as barometers for the business manager. We may learn that something very trying is going on in the individual's personal life ("My mother-in-law has been staying at my house for the past two weeks!") that will color the individual's demeanor during that session. These conversations serve to make people comfortable prior to beginning the discussion du jour. Discussions should not be adversarial – each individual has a valid viewpoint, and no one's opinions or ideas should be marginalized.

No doubt every one of us has experienced someone with a "short fuse." What if the COTR snaps at the contractor during your meeting? What if your significant other snaps at you during dinner? How can you cope with these situations? Will Rogers used to say that the only way to appreciate another person's point of view is to stand behind him, and look at the world through his eyes. Find out if something happened to that person that made him angry, made him feel insignificant or stupid, or made him feel unappreciated. The reaction you saw may have nothing at all to do with the instant situation. This is difficult - it requires stepping back from a possible confrontation, taking a deep breath and diving back into the conversation to find the true intent or message, after taking into account whatever information you can obtain.

In his book on shaping America's foreign policy (Crusaders and Pragmatists), John Stoessinger describes two kinds of individuals. One type is the "my way or no way" type ("crusader"), and the other focuses on the goals, realizes compromises must be made, and walks away with a workable agreement ("pragmatist"). In our profession, this is referred to as positional negotiations (take a stand and fight to the death) vs. principled negotiations (focus on the issues and agree on a solution).

One of the chapters in last year's NCMA National Education Seminar was on communications. That lesson told us that each person has "filters" through which information travels – they may be cultural, educational, positional (i.e., where the person is in the management chain), etc. For every message, there is a sender, a receiver, and a medium through which the message is transmitted (verbal, e-mail, letter, etc.). And we can see in our every day lives that if the message is not being received, we need to change the sender, change the receiver, or change the medium. When you tell your teenaged son he shouldn't smoke, he may go ballistic. But if a peer or a teacher gives him the same message, he may react totally differently. If one of your employees feels that every correction or constructive criticism made is a slap in the face, then either the sender of the message or the medium should be changed in order to get to the desired result.

How can we reach this state of nirvana? Sit in on as many negotiation sessions as you can – listen and observe. If someone in your office is particularly adept at dealing with people, ask if you can sit in on meetings with them. Watch what works, what doesn't work, how difficult situations or discussions are diffused, and note the tone of the conversation. Try some of these techniques in your personal life. As stated above, at the end of your career, the measure of your success will be less about the grade level and salary you've achieved, and more about how well you've managed your relationships.

Editor's note: Ms. Rogin has updated the listing of GWAC's and Multi-Agency contracts that resides on the Office of Procurement web page.

IS EXTINCTION FAR OFF?

by Geoff Gauger

Most would agree that the dinosaurs that once roamed the earth in great numbers became extinct because they did not evolve with their environment. Today, the procurement profession is said to be fast approaching the need to evolve or face extinction.

According to the 2000 – 01 Occupational Outlook Handbook, purchasing professionals numbered about 547,000 in 1998 and demand for these workers is not expected to keep pace with the rising level of economic activity. The reduced demand is due, in part, to the increased use of computers when evaluating technical and business considerations that influence the purchasing decision. Additionally, electronic commerce is expected to further change the role of the procurement processional by becoming a preferred approach for accomplishing a variety of procurement tasks. These tasks range from conducting market surveys, to selecting vendors, to placing orders, to making payments online. According to recent predictions, overall government employment is expected to decline by 165,000 jobs by the year 2008. Such predictions indicate that there must be a paradigm shift. The shift must include the procurement profession shaking its image of being a bunch of rule-bound bureaucrats that prevent customers from getting what they need to one where procurement professionals are business consultants who ensure the client gets what they need, where and when they need it. This evolution to becoming business consultants is expected to involve being an integral part of a project's procurement life cycle, involving everything from capital investment determinations and estimating to asset disposal. How is the evolution to becoming business consultants taking place?

Part of the evolution has to do with the way computerized systems are dramatically simplifying many of the routine acquisition functions and improving the efficiencies of the procurement process. Another profound impact on the profession is putting credit cards into the hands of the customer. As a result of these and other activities, the procurement professional is becoming less important to the organization. In order to be viable in the future, procurement professionals must become savvy in the use of information technology while also acquiring a greater working knowledge of the goods or services that are to be purchased, any applicable market conditions, pricing trends and the marketplace that the goods or services are to be acquired.

Another aspect of the evolution taking place in the procurement profession is in the slew of laws that have been past recently. The 1994 Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act and the 1996 Clinger-Cohen Act have brought about the fundamental changes in the way we do business today. These Acts alone have presented vast opportunities for reforming government procurement. They have made it possible to bring about innovations in electronic buying that are certain to become even more important in the near future. One example is GSA's E-Buy, which speeds the purchase of services over the Internet by allowing detailed communications between an agency and the contractor. Additional contracting tools that are now beginning to be used to speed the procurement process and save money include such vehicles as online reverse auctioning, share-in-savings contracts, and performance based contracting.

According to Corey Rindner, Treasury's Procurement Executive, "The future success of a procurement office will depend on having the right people with the right skills." What are the right people with the right skills? They are people with skills that include patience, integrity, responsibility, initiative, common sense, cooperation, problem solving, caring, perseverance, organization, customer service and courage.

Because today's procurement environment is certain to be different tomorrow, possessing the right skills will include undertaking the training needed to develop new skill sets to take on the challenges of the future. Today's leading procurement organizations realize their people are the biggest factor in being successful and are assets whose value can be enhanced through training. A wise person once said "To be successful in today's highly competitive world, any organization must look towards its human capital. The ability to master technology, manage complex systems and innovate, will increasingly mark the difference between successful and unsuccessful organizations." Such organizations take a strategic approach to train their people on new practices and provide customized training targeted to specific needs.

Actively undertaking this training ensures that one becomes one of the right people with the right skills.

No one knows for certain what the future will hold for the procurement profession. However, downsizing and procurement consolidation that is expected to take place will increase the demands placed on the procurement professional because there will be fewer people to accomplish the workload. This, in turn, will result in an increase in individual workload and level of responsibility.

The talented, successful procurement professionals of the future will be exceptional people who can master the traditional basics of government buying and can also self-teach themselves or work with others to move beyond the basics and operate outside the box. Are you prepared for the future of the procurement profession?

The following book review discusses one of those "retooling" mechanisms that we all can adopt to survive and thrive during the evolution of our profession.

Working with Emotional Intelligence

by Sheryl A. Smith

Sheryl is an intern currently assigned to the Procurement Services Division in Departmental Offices. Sheryl is the second intern to contribute to this newsletter column.

"Out-of-control emotions can make smart people stupid" so is the conclusion of Daniel Goleman's *Working with Emotional Intelligence.* "Emotional intelligence" refers to the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.

With a large number of organizations downsizing, those people who remain are more and more visible. A mid-level employee might easily have hidden a hot temper, immaturity or shyness in the past. Now competencies such as managing one's emotions, handling encounters well, teamwork, and leadership show and count more than ever.

When we are under the sway of impulse, agitation, and emotionality, our ability to think and work suffers. Working with emotional intelligence is being able to monitor and regulate one's own and other's feelings and to use feelings to guide thought and action. In order to work with emotional intelligence you must have emotional competence. Emotional competence is the ability to listen, to influence, to collaborate and to get people motivated and working together well. People with "book smarts" but no emotional intelligence may end up working for people who have lower IQ's and education but who excel in emotional intelligence skills.

You may have a MBA from one of the Ivy-Leaguesuniversities. You may have one of the best ideas to usher your company into the 21st century, but if you are not able to sell it to the executive staff and implement it, your idea is worthless to your company.

The more complex the job, the more emotional intelligence matters. A deficiency in this ability can hinder the use of whatever technical expertise or intellect a person may have.

According to Goleman, people who have emotional intelligence "don't compete - they collaborate".

For star performance in all jobs, in every field, emotional competence is twice as important as purely cognitive ability. For success at the highest levels and in leadership positions, emotional competence accounts for virtually the entire advantage. How to do this? Pick up a copy.

CARD SERVICES

by Martha Lanigan

The Purchase Card as a Payment Method

Treasury policy in TD 76-04 encourages use of purchase cards as a payment method with regular contracting documentation for transactions over the micro-purchase limit. Generally these cards would be issued to contracting officers in a procurement office, but not exclusively. Companies doing business with the Government should find the ability to receive payment in 48 hours from the time an item is shipped a very attractive feature. Purchase cards also facilitate use of e-malls.

e-Statements

Any cardholder can view their monthly statement of account on line. E-statements are updated on a daily basis and are a good way to track your purchases. To view your statement on line, call the Citibank Help Desk on 1-800-790-7206, option 2, to get your User ID and Password. A training module for e-statements is on the TreasNet (IntraNet) web site under Card Services.

Point of Sale Discounts

SmartPay cardholders can receive a discount at some GSA Schedule vendors simply by using their Government purchase card. A list of the vendors offering point of sale discounts is on the GSA web site at www.fss.gsa.gov/services/gsa-smartpay/pos.doc.

CitiMart

Four bureaus are piloting use of CitiMart, Citibank's electronic mall which features an electronic log for purchase cardholders. CitiMart is available through CitiDirect at www.citidirect-gcs.com at Bureau of Public Debt, FLETC, U.S. Secret Service, and the U.S. Mint.

Training

Do you need a training program for your cardholders? Are you revising your purchase cardholder training? Check out the GSA web site for a good training product. Go to www.fss.gsa.gov/services/gsa-smartpay. Look under Index for the GSA SmartPay Web-based Training, Purchase Card Program.

WHAT'S UP IN THE BUREAUS

At MINT
50 STATES QUARTER PROGRAM
by Joan Tuenge

Perhaps you are one of the 110 million people nationwide who are now collecting the Mint's popular new 50 States quarters. The Mint is now in the 3rd year of its hugely profitable 50 States Quarter Program. Five new quarters are issued each year in the order in which the state joined the Union. With the program scheduled to run through 2009, demand for quarters has risen from about 1.5 billion quarters a year to more than 6 billion in 2000! Needless to say, the program has been a challenge for the Mint. The procurement staff, especially, has put in a lot of hard work negotiating and administering many new contracts in time to meet rollout deadlines. The record-breaking increased production means working closely with suppliers for increased purchases of copper, nickel and zinc metals, and quarter strip. Other contracts include a long-term public relations/advertising contract to market the program, a wide variety of new packaging components (bags, rolls, paper setup boxes, metal case jewelry boxes, cardboard sleeves, etc.), along with contracts for jewelry and other coin-related products, such as collector maps, bookmarks, keychains, clocks and watches. The program has resulted in a significant growth of the Mint's customer base. Clearly, the program's success is dependent on procurement's role in managing these critical contracts and maintaining lasting supplier partnerships.

At IRS
DoD AWARD GARNERED

Jim Williams, IRS Assistant Commissioner for Procurement, along with Mickey Jones, recently accepted a very significant award on behalf of the entire procurement community there. The award was presented by the Department of Defense for IRS' constant support of IRS employees who also serve in the National Guard and Reserve units across the country. The National Guard and the various reserve units rely on a high number of IRS employees to successfully complete training and operational missions on a continuing basis. The IRS was recognized as an employer that places a high priority on encouraging participation in these military units.

At FLETC
MOVING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY
By Steve Watters

Desiring to increase the efficiency of its operations and enhance the acquisition support provided to its customers the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, (FLETC) Procurement Division (PRO) began researching the commercially available contract writing systems in the Summer of 1999. Somewhat prior to this time the FLETC Finance Division had decided to upgrade its financial software program to AMS Momentum. Knowing that whatever system was decided upon would have to be compatible with the financial software a decision was made to obtain the AMS Procurement Desktop contract writing system. An order was placed on schedule in the early Fall 1999 for both the AMS Momentum and Procurement Desktop and pre-implementation meetings commenced shortly thereafter.

Implementation commenced in the Spring of 2000 and was virtually completed by August 2000. As with any new endeavor various bumps and potholes have been encountered along the way preventing full utilization of Procurement Desktop. Some of the challenges were with the changes needed to the various versions of the software package while others have been external influences (e.g., FLETC planning to migrate to Office 2000 the Spring of 2001 and the current Procurement Desktop version not being fully compatible). However, it is expected that Procurement Desktop will be fully functional and be fully utilized by "all-hands" in the Summer of 2001.

At OTS
DECEMBER CONFERENCE

by Amanda Boshears
Contract Specialist Intern

The Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) held a staff conference for its Washington employees on December 12-13, 2000. The Conference took place over one and one half days at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Jefferson Auditorium. Amanda Boshears, first-year intern, worked closely with Director Ellen Seidman's staff to coordinate and procure the services and facilities required for the conference. The conference was a great success.

Ellen Seidman delivered opening remarks and answered questions from employees regarding the Business Plans for 2001 and provided status of many projects. Rick Riccobono, OTS Deputy Director, led an informative supervisory panel, which discussed information technology, compliance policy, and thrift examination issues. The conference brought in outside speakers to discuss financial planning and technology risk management issues. An excellent motivational speaker gave OTS employees a lot to think about and left a great impression on them.

Since OTS has several retirement programs, breakout sessions gave employees the opportunity to learn more about their retirement and thrift savings plans, such as Federal Employees Retirement System, Civilian Service Retirement System, Thrift Savings Plan, the Financial Institution Retirement Fund (FIRF), and the Financial Institution Thrift Plan (FITP). FIRF/FITP are plans for OTS employees.

The conference also allowed employee participation by playing Jeopardy and Greed games. Rick Riccobono served as emcee as nine selected employees participated in a complete game of Jeopardy. Questions and answers were taken from the supervisory panel. The Office of Chief Counsel presided over the Greed game, which served as the annual ethics training for the Washington staff.

Ellen Seidman thanked the entire Washington staff for their outstanding contributions throughout the year. She also expressed appreciation to Amanda Boshears and the procurement staff for their efforts in making the conference a resounding success.

And while we're on the subject…..

TAKING THE GUESSWORK OUT OF CONFERENCE PLANNING

By Michael W. Miller
Contract Specialist Intern

For agencies planning their own conferences, assistance is now available from a variety of sources. Once such source is GSA's newly formed "Conference Planning" course which is offered monthly in Washington, D.C., at a cost of $250 per student. This ground-breaking course for federal employees provides information and guidance on where to hold conferences, how to obtain proposals, estimating budget costs, what's included in room rates, using approved hotel accommodations and the best times to hold conferences. The course also provides insight into the new travel regulations and describes how these regulations impact those planning conferences.

As an added bonus, students attending the "Conference Planning" course are also being introduced to "AllMeetings.com" which is a web-site designed to help personnel plan cost-effective, high-quality conferences. "AllMeetings.com" offers a proprietary commercial search engine that provides users, instant, individualized conference cost proposals culled from a custom information bank of thousands of hotels in more than 250 cities; all at no charge to the user.

Another excellent source of assistance is the USDA's bulletin "Guidance for Conference Planning," which can be found on the USDA's web-site at www.ars.usda.gov. This bulletin provides the conference planner with a step-by-step guide through what can be an exhausting trip through the conference planning process. The following areas of planning a conference are covered in detail: planning/developing a conference planning committee, developing milestone schedules, drafting specification sheets, budgeting, and conference site selection.

Why "guess" how to plan your agency's next conference. Get assistance from one of the above-listed sources and you are well on your way to removing the "guesswork" which prevents you from planning a cost-effective, high-quality conference.

At BPD
PUBLIC DEBT PROCUREMENT DIVISION RELOCATION

by Bruce Feirtag

The Bureau of Public Debt Procurement Division was previously located in two separate buildings in downtown Parkersburg, West Virginia, due to Public Debt's expanding franchise business. The service group who performed buys for Public Debt's program offices occupied one building, while the group servicing Public Debt's franchise customers was in the other. Effective August 14, 2000, both groups are located together in a newly remodeled office in another downtown Parkersburg location. With both groups in a single location, the entire Procurement staff enjoys better communication and information sharing, not to mention larger "food days." The physical space offers functionality and some comfortable room for growth. Next time you're in Parkersburg, stop by to see our new office and say hello!

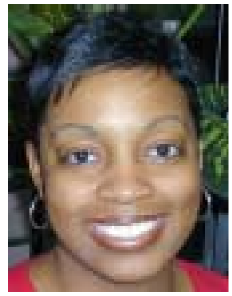
BPD's new mailing address, phone, and fax are:

U.S. Department of the Treasury
Bureau of the Public Debt
Division of Procurement
200 Third Street, UNB 4th Floor
Parkersburg, WV 26101-5312

phone: (304) 480-7137
fax: (304) 480-7203

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Meet Our Interns



ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF...

Hello, my name is Christina Small. I am currently employed at the Department of Treasury in the Procurement Intern Program. My first rotational assignment was at the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency from July 2000 through mid-November 2000. Since the completion of my first rotation, I have been permanently assigned to the United States Secret Service. Before working for Treasury, I was employed at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute, where I worked in Contracting and Grants, respectively. I attended the University of Maryland College Park from 1994-1998 and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications. In the fall of 2001, I plan on going back to the University of Maryland to obtain a Master's Degree in Business Management.

Being in the Treasury Procurement Intern Program has been a pleasurable experience and a great learning opportunity. I am looking forward to the Contracting road that is ahead of me, which will include various training courses and more complex acquisitions.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

JOAN TUENGE JOINS OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

The Office of Procurement is very happy to announce that effective January 21, Joan Tuenge became the Chief for the Electronic Commerce Branch. Welcome, Joan.

TAMMIE JOHNSON PROMOTED

Tammie Johnson was selected last summer for a Supervisory Contract Specialist (Contracting Officer) position at the Bureau of Public Debt. Tammie is responsible for administering and planning the Procurement-Contracting Program and providing direct procurement and contracting services to Bureau of Public Debt and other external customers. She supervises six contract specialists and one procurement technician. Tammie has previously served as Treasury's representative on the interdepartmental "Front Line Forum," which provided front line contract specialist insights to the Director of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy. To the benefit of Treasury procurement, Tammie continues to be active in development of electronic commerce.

JIM WILLIAMS LEAVES IRS PROCUREMENT

IRS recently announced a new posting for Mr. Jim Williams. He will lead the IRS Business Systems Modernization Organization.

BEP PERSONNEL CHANGES

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) is pleased to welcome five new employees, Sharon Archer and Tonya Kreps both from Financial Management Service, Ken Sawh from the United States Mint (Customer Service), Christina Tayman from DOD – Navy, and Boyd Greene IV from the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. Ms. Archer is the supervisory contract specialist in the Contract Administration Division. Ms. Kreps is a senior contract specialist in Materials & IT Contracts Division. Mr. Sawh, Ms. Tayman and Mr. Greene are Contract Specialists in the Equipment & Services Contracts Division. We welcome them all and hope they enjoy their tenure at the BEP.

BEP DEPARTURES

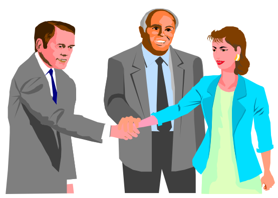
George Leininger, Procurement Analyst, left BEP on January 12, 2001 to accept a position with the Veterans Administration in Cleveland, Ohio. We wish George well!

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

For current Treasury vacancy announcements, visit http://www.usajobs.opm.gov or the OP web site http://www.treas.gov/procurement

TREASURY PROCUREMENT CONFERENCE 2001:

Improving the Soft Skills of the



Business Manager

When: March 27-28, 2001
Where: Bolling AFB Officers' Club
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day

Continental breakfast and sit-down lunch will be provided.

Registration forms and the agenda can be found on the OP web site. Follow instructions for downloading and submitting registrations.

http://www.treas.gov/procurement/